/240 cont./

177 the races, as well as of cultures started in the colonial period, according to the records of the chroniclers of those times, not only with the whites who penetrated the territory on expeditions of conquest or trade but also with the Negroes whom the natives had taken as slaves in exchange for pearls each time that the slave ships dropped anchor off their coast. This mixing continued sporadically, giving the characteristics of indomitable ferocity of La Guajira throughout the colonial period, and has accelerated as has cultural contact during recent years for reasons already noted.

144 177 563 This does not mean, naturally, that the racial composition of the La Guajira Peninsula is exclusively mestizo -- a mixture of Indians with whites, mestizos, Negroes, or mulattos -- because the greatest percentage of inhabitants is still pure Indian, especially so in the districts where they have had less contact with the civilized world, as happens in the Sierra de Jarara, for whose inhabitants there is a term very common in the whole territory, cerreros, that is, pure Indians in the widest sense of the word: Indians who preserve not only their physical characteristics but their unalterable psychic and cultural traits.

This crossing, as has happened in all the cases which we have been able to observe in societies dominated by other cultures, has been effected by the combination of the feminine element in the dominated race and the masculine element on the dominating side. The cases where the opposite has occurred are very rare. It may be added that this appears to be a general law, at least among the South American communities which had to submit to the invasion of Europeans, brought about in various ways and according to the period of penetration. /241/

177 563 Guajiro traditional institutions were so strong that the changes in social composition did not at first essentially affect their cultural patterns. The newcomers adapted themselves perfectly to the norms of native life and made common cause with them, only differing in their physical type resulting from cross-breeding /mestizaje/ and possibly some cultural manifestations

[6 cont.]

105 177 However, at the beginning the fundamental change in their economy did not affect their most characteristic social institutions. They preserved, almost to the present, their family organization based on the uterine line of kinship and all the other institutions which derive from, or are directly or indirectly related, to it. Only now with the presence of an ever increasing number of foreign elements who are attracted to La Guajira territory by different circumstances is the Indian gradually losing these fundamental ideas of his organization and beginning to change them, forced to do so by events, to the point that today it is becoming difficult to decide up to what point a social phenomenon is autochthonous and to what point it is impregnated with new ideas brought in by evangelists, government and military officials, and traders.

● 144 175 In the racial aspect the phenomenon shows up less strongly, although, as in other aspects, it has been gradually accelerating as means of communication develop and the contraband between the islands of Aruba and Curaçao, the department of Magdalena, and the port of Maracaibo increase. Racial mixing [mestizaje] began in the colony not only between Spaniards and Indians, as happened in the greater part of Latin America, but also with the Negroes who were acquired as slaves from the Dutch and British slave traders in exchange for pearls. Naturally, this mixture was of insignificant proportions, but [7] at the present time it is developing more rapidly, stemming from the element, also Negroid, of the coastal areas of Colombia and Lake Maracaibo. In spite of all this, at the present time one can still find a large percentage of the pure element in La Guajira, especially in the regions distant from the traffic with Maracaibo or with the interior of Colombia, or relatively isolated from civilizado centers of La Guajira such as Uribia, Puerto Estrella, Puerto López, etc.

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132 031 In the past five to six years La Guajira has suffered extremely severe summers which have almost completely crushed its economic bases, stock grazing and agriculture, for scarcely enough rainfall has fallen to save their pastures or their harvests.